

**Longview-Kelso-Rainier  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**2014 Obligation and Closure Report**

**March 31, 2015**

**Prepared by the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments**



## OBLIGATION AND CLOSURE REPORT

CWCOG's Annual Listing of Obligated and Closed Projects For 2014

### Introduction

The 2014 Obligation and Closure Report for the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) details the projects that obligated federal transportation funds in the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area in 2014.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate continued coordination between the agencies responsible for implementing projects programmed in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). Those agencies include CWCOG, RiverCities Transit, Cowlitz County, City of Longview, City of Kelso, and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). In addition, the report serves as an evaluation tool for projects programmed in the MTIP's preceding program year. By compiling a list of projects that obligated funds in 2014 and projects that closed, CWCOG is better equipped to monitor the region's overall success at constructing and completing projects.

### Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments

CWCOG is a regional planning body comprised of local governmental jurisdictions and agencies within Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. Non-voting and ex-officio members from both the public and private sectors also actively participate in activities of the agency. The CWCOG is the lead planning agency for both the bi-state Longview-Kelso-Rainier, Oregon MPO and the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). The MPO is federally mandated and authorized to fulfill federal planning requirements for the Longview-Kelso-Rainier, Oregon urbanized area. The RTPO is voluntary, locally developed, and fulfills state planning requirements for the five-county region.

The planning area overseen by the Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPO is illustrated in Figure 1.

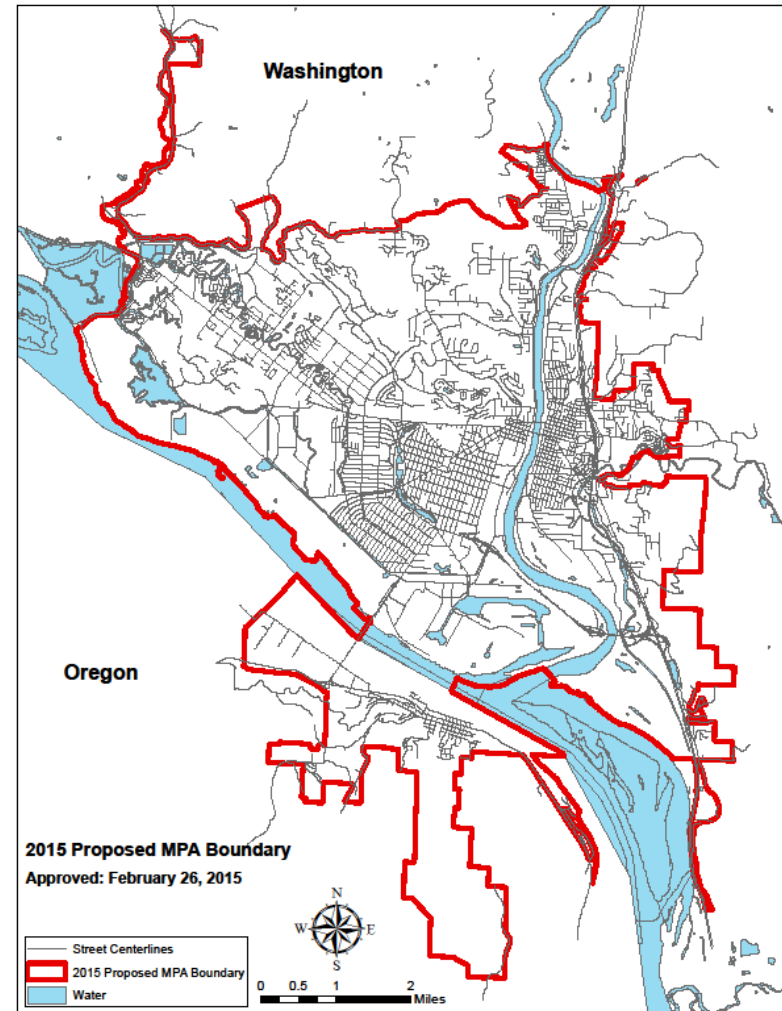


Figure 1. Longview-Kelso-Rainier Metropolitan Planning Area

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As the lead agency for the Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPO, CWCOG is tasked with carrying out the rules and regulations set forth in federal transportation legislation – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) – and for transportation policy development, planning, and programming for the region.

#### Annual Listing of Obligated and Closed Projects

The Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPO is required under MAP-21 to publish an annual listing of projects that obligated federal funds within the MPO planning area during 2014. This listing of projects is in response to requirements set forth in Chapter 23 U.S.C. § 450.3332 which states, *“an annual listing of obligated projects, including investments in pedestrian walkways, and bicycle transportation facilities, for which federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year shall be published or otherwise made available by the cooperative effort of the State, transit operator, and metropolitan planning organization for public review. The listing shall be consistent with the funding categories identified in each metropolitan transportation improvement program.”*

The 2014-2017 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) was approved by the CWCOG Board September 25, 2014. Once a project has been programmed into an approved RTIP, the project's sponsor(s) can begin obligation of the project by accessing funds to start preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, or construction.

#### **Obligation**

In the context of this report, obligation is the legal commitment to pay the Federal share of a project's cost. An obligated project is one that has been authorized by a Federal agency as meeting eligibility requirements for federal funds. Projects

for which funds have been obligated are not necessarily initiated or completed in the program year. For obligations on a construction project, typically the project needs to complete a competitive bid process and begin construction if an acceptable bid is received. The amount of the obligation usually does not equal the total cost of the project. An obligation may be for only one phase of a multi-phased project, and the obligation amount listed does not account for local funding spent on a project. For Federal Transit Administration (FTA) projects, obligation occurs when the FTA grant is awarded. For Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) projects, obligation occurs when a project agreement is executed and the recipient agency requests that the funds be obligated. A project agreement defines specific project elements that are eligible for funding, i.e. how financing will occur; and agency roles, responsibilities and liabilities. Once funds have been obligated, the eligible recipient begins incurring eligible project expenses and then requests reimbursement from the obligated funds. The reimbursement request must demonstrate that the recipient incurred the costs consistent with the project agreement and all federal rules.

The amount of the federal obligation usually does not equal the total estimated cost of the project (which includes total funding from federal, state, and local sources for all phases of the project). An obligation may include one or multiple phases of a single project. In addition, federal obligation amounts do not account for any state or local funding spent on a project.

#### **De-obligation**

An agency may request that funds be de-obligated from a project if the agency has decided not to proceed with that project, if the agency has completed the project without using all the obligated funds, or if funds are moved between phases within a single project. Funds may also be de-obligated if a

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project that has previously obligated moves from one funding source to another. De-obligations are noted on Table 1 as negative values (i.e., -\$100,000)

Table 1 lists projects from the City of Longview, City of Kelso, and the urbanized portions of Cowlitz County. These projects were listed in the 2014-2017 RTIP. Projects within the RTIP that did not have funds obligated during 2014 are not included in this report. To meet federal reporting requirements, the information provided on Table 1 includes the total amount that was programmed for the project in the 2014-2017 RTIP, the amount of funds that were obligated in 2014, and the amount of federal funds remaining on the project for future obligations.

In 2014, \$4.9 million in federal funds were obligated for projects in the Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPO area. For comparison, the total obligation in 2013 was \$2.6 million. The significant increase in obligations in 2014 is largely the result of recent efforts at the federal, state and regional level to improve upon project delivery.

### Closure

The final stage of project delivery is the project close-out process. After a project has been completed, the close-out process wraps up any final reimbursements and officially closes the project. In 2014, three projects closed in the Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPO (*Table 2*). The total amount of federal funds expended prior to close out for this project is \$267,050.

### **Federal Funding Categories**

The following list of funding types is listed as acronyms in *Table 1 – FFY 2014 Obligated Projects* and *Table 2 – FFY Closed Projects*.

BRM	Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation
HPP	High Priority Project
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program
HSRP	High Speed Rail Program
STPE	Surface Transportation Program – Transportation Enhancement (rescinded in MAP-21)
STPR	Surface Transportation Program - Rural
STPUS	Surface Transportation Program - Urban Small Areas
TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program

More information regarding FHWA funding sources can be found at: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/federalaid/projects.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/federalaid/projects.cfm)

### **Acronyms**

CN Auth	Construction Authorized
COG	Council of Governments
CMP	Corridor Management Plan
FA	Federal Aid
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
PE Auth	Preliminary Engineering Authorized
PH:	Phase
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
RW Auth	Right of Way Authorized
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

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**TABLE 1. 2014 OBLIGATED PROJECTS**

Agency	Fund Type	Project Name	STIP ID	Phase	Federal \$ Programmed in MTIP	Federal \$ Obligated in FFY 2014	Approved
Kelso	HSRP	South Kelso Railroad Crossing Study	KEL 3	PE	\$300,000	-\$36,235	6/18/14
Kelso	HPP,STPUS,HSIP	West Main St. Realignment	WA-03267	RW	\$2,500,000	-\$66,000	7/21/14
Kelso	HPP,STPUS,HSIP	West Main St. Realignment	WA-03267	PE	\$0	\$66,000	7/21/14
Longview	TAP	Downtown Corridor Improvements	WA-04259	CN	\$0	\$630,000	5/21/14
Longview	BRM	Washington Way Bridge Replacement	WA-04262	PE	\$613,600	\$154,400	7/11/14
Longview	BRM	Washington Way Bridge Replacement	WA-04262	CN	\$0	\$4,307,701	7/11/14
SW WSDOT	STP - Flexible	SR 411/Tenant Way to Lincoln Street - Concrete Pavement	441113C, 2013-16	PE	\$0	-\$40,000	4/8/14
SW WSDOT	STP - Flexible	SR 411/Tenant Way to Lincoln Street - Concrete Pavement	441113C, 2013-16	CN	\$0	-\$50,000	4/8/14
						<b>\$4,965,866</b>	

**TABLE 2. 2014 CLOSED PROJECTS**

Agency	Fund Type	Project Name	STIP ID	Phase	Federal \$ Obligated in 2014	Closed
Kelso	HSRP	South Kelso Railroad Crossing Study	KEL 3	PE	\$263,765	6/25/2014
Kelso	HPP,STPUS,HSIP	West Main St. Realignment	WA-03267	PE	\$0	7/21/2014
SW WSDOT	STP - Flexible	SR 411/Tenant Way to Lincoln Street - Concrete Pavement	441113C, 2013-16	PE	-\$6,387	5/16/2014
SW WSDOT	STP - Flexible	SR 411/Tenant Way to Lincoln Street - Concrete Pavement	441113C, 2013-16	CE	\$9,672	5/16/2014
					<b>\$267,050</b>	